

WHAT RECRUITMENT STRATEGIES WILL A SMALL  
LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCY USE  
TO COMPETE IN THE JOB MARKET  
BY THE YEAR 2006?

A project presented to  
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Peace Officer Standards and Training

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This Command College project is a FUTURES study of a particular emerging issue in law enforcement. Its purpose is NOT to predict the future, but rather to project a number of possible scenarios for strategic planning consideration.

Defining the future differs from analyzing the past because the future has not yet happened. In this project, useful alternatives have been formulated systematically so that the planner can respond to a range of possible future environments.

Managing the future means influencing the future, creating it, constraining it, adapting to it. A futures study points the way.

The views and conclusions expressed in the Command College project are those of the author and are not necessarily those of the Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST).

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## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **ISSUE IDENTIFICATION**

#### Introduction

California's cities are facing a crisis. There is a huge demand for thousands of new law enforcement officers to meet the needs of a constantly growing population. Simultaneously, a serious shortage of qualified and committed law enforcement officer applicants has resulted in unprecedented effort by law enforcement agencies to hire experienced officers away from other law enforcement agencies. Law enforcement throughout the country is engaged in head to head competition to recruit, hire, train and retain law enforcement officers from a limited pool of candidates<sup>1</sup>.

Even as the country is experiencing an economic boom, many of the usual qualified candidates looking for jobs in the law enforcement arena have been going to the private sector. Comparable or higher salaries and more favorable working hours attract these candidates. Financial challenges lay ahead for many small agencies attempting to recruit and retain qualified candidates. Many agencies are unable to expend the resources necessary to reach out and market themselves. Although organizations like the Los Angeles Police Department can reach out to recruit from outside California, they too still have difficulty hiring qualified candidates. A year long effort by the Los Angeles Police Department to recruit outside California only netted 521 applicants who completed the testing out of a total of 7,666. It was not clear how many of those applicants actually went on to the police academy.<sup>2</sup> But, this is not a California problem only.

Nationwide, recruitment for law enforcement officers has been difficult, and in some regions of the United States agencies are lowering standards to fill vacancies. Have we learned anything from Rampart? All across the country, agencies are telling the same sad story

concerning the challenges of finding and hiring qualified candidates. Many agencies are willing to pay staff a bonus for sponsoring a new recruit that ultimately is hired. In Inkster, Michigan the mayor ordered an emergency pay increase of \$10,000 a year for every officer with more than two years experience.<sup>3</sup> Atlanta City Council President Robb Pitts says Atlanta needs outside help for its police force. Pitts wants the council to ask state troopers, Fulton County police or Fulton sheriff's deputies to help their police force. There are 400 vacancies in the 1,800-person department. A 22 percent shortage of personnel has caused this drastic proposal.<sup>4</sup> In Chicago, a recruiting drive that lasted six months resulted in only 700 applicants. 2,000 applicants were expected to take the exam, and the deadline was extended in an effort to get more applicants.

Referring to Chicago, a former New York City Police Commissioner, William Bratton, commented that Chicago was not unique. New York had spent \$10 million on a recruiting campaign that by all accounts was a complete failure.<sup>5</sup> A similar situation exists in Alabama where state leaders are looking for more troopers and correctional officers. Bills are pending in the Alabama legislature to fund additional hiring, but officials admit funding is only part of the problem and recruitment is a high priority.<sup>6</sup>

#### Statement of the Issue

What recruitment strategies will be successful to fill law enforcement vacancies throughout California and the United States? Some agencies try to lure candidates with bonuses, some by lowering standards, and still others by offering more salary with college degrees. But, the success rate has been less than acceptable.

Recruiting decisions being made now will likely determine the quality of police work for years to come, says Elaine Deck, an analyst for the International Association of Chiefs of

Police<sup>7</sup>. The number of vacancies in the 10 largest cities is astronomical, as shown in Table 1.1 below.

## **Wanted: More police**

Police departments across the nation are struggling to fill thousands of vacancies and keep up with attrition. The current force and number of vacancies the police departments in the 10 largest cities are trying to fill this year:

	<b>Vacancies</b>	<b>Current force</b>	<b>Increase sought</b>
New York	1,300*	40,000	3.3%
Chicago	650	13,371	4.9%
Detroit	500	4,200	11.9%
Los Angeles	386	9,178	4.2%
Philadelphia	233*	7,000	3.3%
Phoenix	156	3,000	5.2%
Dallas	154	2,880	5.3%
San Diego	150	2,064	7.3%
Houston	142	5,422	2.6%
San Antonio	77	1,953	3.9%

\* - Number of recruits training in the police academy

**Table 1.1**  
Percentage of vacancies in ten largest police departments<sup>8</sup>

### Literature Review

Table 1.1 clearly illustrates the issue of recruitment as being a nationwide epidemic. The largest U.S. police force, New York City Police Department, has a whopping 1,300 vacancies, and the San Antonio Police Department, the smallest of the large police departments, has 77 vacancies. This is where the problem truly begins. The fact that the larger law enforcement agencies are hiring almost anyone who can walk and chew gum at the same time, just to fill vacancies, is frightening to the entire law enforcement profession. Many agencies are lowering standards in terms of drug use, physical fitness, and in other critical areas relating to minimum education requirements and ethical behavioral traits. When common sense risk management

processes are not followed, an unfavorable public perception is created of the organization as well as the profession. Police Officers have one of the most difficult and complex jobs in America today. Officers are expected to make decisions with very limited information. These decisions involve critically important issues and are subject to seemingly endless reviews and second guessing<sup>9</sup>. Historically, law enforcement has advertised for open positions in the local and regional newspapers, radio and television media, and by word of mouth. Has law enforcement been successful in hiring qualified candidates who have responded to such marketing strategies? Perhaps. But, if we examine the information reflected in Table 1.2, an argument can be made that when law enforcement throws out the proverbial net to draw a large pool of applicants for testing, the rate of success is disappointing versus if an agency identified a specific pool of candidates from colleges, military institutions and other such places and targeted those motivated and ethically sound candidates, the success rate would improve. Granted, the numbers of applicants would be smaller, but the quality of the applicant would be more attractive to the agency.



**COUNTY OF MARIN**  
**DEPUTY SHERIFF TRAINEE APPLICANTS**  
**(1/23/98 through 1/23/99)**

EXAM STEP	GENDER			ETHNICITIES												TOTAL
	Male	Female	Unk.	Caucasian		African-American		Hispanic		Asian/PI		Native American		Unknown		
	M	F		M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	
Minimum Qualifications	369	54	0	237	38	33	9	47	4	36	2	3	0	13	1	423
Did Not Show	176	24	0	99	16	25	7	25	1	18	0	2	0	7	0	200
Pass-Post Written	169	24	6	128	18	7	4	14	1	14	0	1	0	5	1	193
Fail-Post Written	40	10	2	20	5	5	1	7	2	6	2	0	0	2	3	53
Pass-Writing Sample	110	22	0	84	17	2	2	9	2	13	0	0	0	2	1	132
Fail-Writing Sample	89	11	0	57	6	7	2	12	1	7	2	1	0	5	0	100
Pass-Agility	198	19	0	140	15	9	2	21	0	20	1	1	0	7	1	217
Fail-Agility	6	13	0	4	8	1	1	1	3	0	1	0	0	0	0	19
Pass-Oral	65	11	0	52	10	1	0	4	0	7	0	0	0	1	1	76
Fail-Oral	10	0	0	8	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	10
Pass-B*Pad	54	7	0	44	7	1	0	3	0	5	0	0	0	1	0	61
Fail-B*Pad	31	4	0	24	3	0	0	3	0	4	0	0	0	0	1	35
Eligibles	52	6	0	42	6	1	0	3	0	5	0	0	0	1	0	58
Certified	46	3	0	37	3	1	0	2	0	5	0	0	0	1	0	49
Failed Psychological	1			1												1
Failed Background	21	2	0	16	2	1	0	2	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	23
Hired	8	1	0	8	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	9

**Table 1.2**  
Deputy Sheriff Trainee Applicants <sup>10</sup>

Table 1.2 reflects the numbers of applicants reached through a conventional newspaper, television, radio and job announcement flier recruitment. A total of 423 applications were received. 200 failed to show for the test. Of the remaining 223 applicants who completed the testing, 49 applicants were certified to begin the background process. Nearly one half failed the background and only nine were hired. Law enforcement, especially small agencies, will need to be innovative and creative to continue identifying and hiring the most qualified candidates. Law

enforcement agencies must involve the entire organization for maximum marketability in recruitment and retention for the future. This project will identify strategies that small law enforcement agencies, and even large agencies can and should use to locate and hire qualified candidates without compromising the high professional standards of conduct that the citizens of this country deserve.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **FUTURES STUDY**

#### Nominal Group Technique

A Nominal Group Technique is a process where a small panel of people are brought together to discuss and share ideas relating to a specific issue and or question. It is an opportunity to brainstorm solutions to a problem by bringing together a knowledgeable and diverse group to identify future trends and events that could impact the issue examined.

The following Nominal Group Technique panel examined the issue of what recruitment strategies will a small law enforcement agency use to compete in the future job market by the year 2006. The Nominal Group Technique panel consisted of seven members: An Undersheriff from Marin County, a Human Resource Senior Principle Analyst, an Assistant Manager of a Communications Dispatch Center, a Psychologist, a member of the County Personnel Commission, a member of the Human Rights Commission and a member of the Marin County Sheriff's Citizen's Advisory Committee. (See Appendix-A) The panel members received a packet of information explaining the Nominal Group Technique. They also received a definition of the Issue Statement, an explanation of trends and events, and some examples of how trends and events could impact the issue in the future.

#### Trends Analysis

The Nominal Group Technique panel identified a list of sixteen trends. The panel participated in further discussions to clarify specific trends. The panel reached a consensus on ten trends that it believed would have the greatest impact on the issue. Using a trend summary

table, the panel gave a numerical value to each trend and assessed the value of the trend within a specified period of time in the future. The panel gave the trends numerical values reflecting the trend's impact on the issue.

	<b>Trends</b>	<b>-5 years</b>	<b>Today</b>	<b>+5 years</b>	<b>+10 years</b>	<b>Concern (1-10)</b>
<b>1</b>	Cost of Living	90	100	130	150	10
<b>2</b>	Increased Diversified Demographics	75	100	150	200	10
<b>3</b>	Emphasis on Long Term Problem Solving and Community Policing	80	100	150	150	7
<b>4</b>	Competition with High Tech Jobs	80	100	125	150	9
<b>5</b>	Inter-agency competition in jobs	90	100	120	140	7
<b>6</b>	Influence of Public Perception on Law Enforcement	90	100	130	150	8
<b>7</b>	Length of hiring process	90	100	125	150	9
<b>8</b>	Use of Marketing Practices in Recruitment Approach	80	100	150	200	8
<b>9</b>	Drug use by Applicants	90	100	120	150	10
<b>10</b>	Emphasis on Ethics During Hiring Process	100	100	120	130	7

**Table 2.1**

Future trends impacting recruitment strategies

Table 2.1 reflects the identified trends and assigned values for each issue.

1. Cost of Living:

The cost of living, housing, gasoline prices, etc. are continually increasing. The ability of law enforcement agencies to be competitive with salaries and associated benefits will directly impact the success and/or failure of future recruitment.

2. Increased Diversified Demographics:

The demographics of the State of California are changing rapidly. The once minority populations of Asians and Latin Americans are now becoming the majority within the State. Law enforcement's ability to interact with these cultures will have a significant impact on future recruitment.

3. Emphasis on Long Term Problem Solving and Community Policing:

Law enforcement's approach to be more involved with the communities through issue identification and problem solving appears to be the norm throughout the profession. Successful applicants will need to be more problem solving oriented and have a more well rounded knowledge of the needs of the communities they serve. The law enforcement profession is currently improving in this area and the panel felt the impact would be minimal on future recruitment.

4. Competition with High Tech Jobs:

Law enforcement will be competing with the high tech job industry for future employees. Currently high tech jobs are paying outrageous salaries with stock options that law enforcement cannot match. If the current economy continues to be strong, the competition with the high tech industry will directly affect future recruitment.

5. Interagency Competition in Jobs:

Several agencies compete with one another to hire a qualified candidate. This has been an ongoing phenomenon and it will continue but with no greater impact in future recruitment.

6. Influence of Public Perception on Law Enforcement:

The public's trust or lack thereof in the law enforcement profession is an issue that law enforcement must address. Future acts of indiscretion by law enforcement personnel similar to Rampart and Rodney King, etc., would be crippling to future recruitment

7. Length of Hiring Process:

The length of time to hire a Peace Officer can take upwards of 8 months. The process is very involved and justifiably so due to excessive stress and scrutiny bestowed the profession.

Aspects of the process should be examined to shorten the time without compromising the integrity of the process.

8. Use of Marketing Practices in Recruitment Approach:

A well defined marketing strategy by law enforcement agencies will be needed to recruit future Peace Officers. Conventional methods of recruitment through media and word of mouth will need to be replaced by aggressive internal recruitment to identify and attract the most qualified candidates.

9. Drug Use by Applicants:

Many applicants are disqualified for their prior use of recreational drugs. The panel felt that society, generally speaking, is over medicated, particularly in the mood altering supplements. The long term effects of medication solution to how one feels could have a direct impact on future recruitment. Do we in law enforcement want a police force of feel good, medicated individuals?

10. Emphasis on Ethics during Hiring Process:

The panel believes that the ethics of a candidate will have a significant affect on whether that candidate will be hired. Although many law enforcement agencies have historically valued ethics in the hiring process, currently the general public is demanding that ethics be scrutinized

as a standard throughout the profession. The panel did not foresee a large impact in future recruitment.

### Events Analysis

The panel repeated the same process in identifying events. The panel struggled to identify ten Events (see Appendix-C). Table 2.2 reflects all ten events and the rating values given by the panel. The panel also identified the year the event would most likely occur, and the probability rating within 5 to 10 years. The panel also gave its opinion of the impact on the issue.

1. Adoption of 3 at 50 by Local Agencies:

An adoption of 3% at the age of 50 will have a profound impact on not only recruitment at the entry level but also at the command level.

2. Subsidized Housing:

Local government provides financial assistance to employees to purchase homes. The panel felt that this would be a positive impact on future recruitment by enabling police officers/deputy sheriffs to reside in the community in which they work.



3. Significant Downward Shift in Economy:

The panel believed that we will experience a downward shift in the economy. This would have a positive impact on future recruitment from the standpoint that law enforcement provides a stable environment in terms of salary and benefits no matter which direction the economy is headed.

4. Court Decision Allowing Affirmative Action in Hiring Process:

The panel discussed the inevitable court decision of some form of affirmative action to be involved in the hiring process. The impact on future recruitment would be minimal due to current efforts to meet the needs of all communities.

5. Mandatory Binding Arbitration for all Public Employees

Approval of binding arbitration for public safety employees as part of the negotiation process would be beneficial. The panel believed that binding arbitration would have a minimal impact on future recruitment.

6. Repeal of the Three Strikes Legislation:

A reversal of the Three Strikes law enacted would put an end to confining serious felonious repeat offenders upwards of 25 years to life. The consensus of the panel was that some of the tough language would be changed to implement discretionary sentencing guidelines. The impact would be minimal.

7. Mandated Child Care:

An implementation of a mandated child care program to assist public employees with young children. This event may occur and the panel believed the impact could be positive in terms of access to a larger pool of candidates who are young parents that otherwise could not afford to work due to child care issues.

8. Legislature enacts Increased Liability Exposure for Police Officers in Excessive Force Claims:

Police Officers will be exposed to large civil damages and be held more personally liable for excessive force cases. The panel foresees more accountability regarding unprofessional conduct by police officers. The panel did not believe stricter liability exposure to police officers would impede future recruitment strategies.

9. Repeal of Peace Officers' Bill of Rights

Government Code 3300 is where the Peace Officers' Bill of Rights are defined and are applied for all internal administrative investigations of police misconduct. The panel identified an event where the established rights are eliminated, exposing police officers to subjective investigations by their respective agencies. Although this was an identified event, the panel believed it would not occur.

10. Significant Domestic Terrorist Acts:

The panel identified a domestic terrorist act such as bombing of the Golden Gate Bridge as occurring within the next ten years. The fear by the public of an act of terrorism exposes law enforcement to a critical analysis as to the local agencies' capabilities of detection, prevention and investigation of such acts. The impact on future recruitment of law enforcement may be impacted positively from a similar standpoint of the Armed Services of protecting our country from the enemy.

	Events	Year(s) >0	+5 years	+10 years	Impact (-10 to +10)
1	Adoption of 3% at 50 by Local Agencies	3	80	100	8
2	Subsidized housing	5	50	80	8
3	Significant downward shift in economy	4	70	90	7
4	Court Decision Allowing Affirmative Action in Hiring Process	5	50	100	6
5	Mandatory Binding Arbitration for all Public Employees	3	80	100	5
6	Repeal of Three Strikes legislation	5	50	50	6
7	Mandated Child care	5	20	40	7
8	Legislature enacts increased liability exposure for Police Officers in excessive force claims	5	30	50	5
9	Repeal of Peace Officers' Bill of Rights	0	0	0	0
10	Significant Domestic Terrorist Acts	5	50	50	7

**Table 2.2**

Future events impacting recruitment strategies

### Cross Impact Analysis

A Cross Impact Analysis is an assessment of events on trends. In other words, if an event did occur, would the event impact an identified trend, and if so, would that impact be a negative impact or a positive impact regarding the issue.

The above table reflects the group's assessment of the positive and negative impacts events have on trends. The impact had a rating scale from –5 negative impact to +5, the most

positive impact. The group engaged in spirited discussions relating to Event One (3% at 50) and its impact upon Trend Five (Inter-Agency Job Competition). The group felt that if all law enforcement agencies had the 3% at 50 retirement benefit, there would be no impact at all, but the impact would be significantly positive if only a few agencies possessed the benefit although a greater impact would be to the Command Staff of an agency. The agency may have greater difficulty filling Command Staff vacancies with qualified candidates due to a lack of experience of those candidates. Events Five and Seven (Mandatory Binding Arbitration for all Public Employees and Mandated child Care) had similarly rated impacts for the same reasons in regards to Trend Five. Mandated child care and mandatory binding arbitration are events that the panel gave a high probability of occurring; however, these events would have minimal impact in terms of future recruitment. Another concern for the group was in reference to Trend Ten (Emphasis on Ethics During Hiring Process) and impact of Events Eight and Nine (Legislature enacts Increased Liability Exposure for Police Officers in Excessive Force Claims and Repeal of Peace Officers' Bill of Rights). Emphasis on ethics in the hiring process must be maintained. A lowering of hiring standards would be catastrophic and would most likely cause Events Eight and Nine to occur. The fallout would be of great consequence in terms of increased litigation, not to mention an almost impossible task of filling prospective vacancies. Who, and why would anyone desire to become a law enforcement officer under those circumstances?

Based upon the work completed by the panel in terms of identifying future trends and events that could impact the issue of future recruitment in law enforcement, the following scenarios are probable.

	T1	T2	T3	T4	T5	T6	T7	T8	T9	T10
E1	+5	0	0	+2	+4/0	0	0	+2	0	0
E2	+5	0	+1	+3	+4	+2	0	+3	0	0
E3	+3	0	+1	+4	0	0	-1	+3	-3	0
E4	0	0	0	0	-3	-1	-4	-3	-4	-4
E5	+3	0	0	+1	+4/0	0	0	0	0	0
E6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
E7	+4	0	0	+4	+4/0	0	0	+2	0	0
E8	0	0	-5	-4	0	-5	-4	-4	0	-4
E9	-4	0	-5	-4	0	-5	-5	-4	0	-4
E10	0	0	+3	+1	0	+3	0	+3	0	+2

**Table 2.3**

### Future Scenarios

After examining the trends and events that may have an impact on the issue of recruitment strategies, alternative futures can be developed through written scenarios. These scenarios are assumptions made about the future and further illustrate the importance of developing strategies to either assist in a favorable future or to mitigate an undesirable future of the issue studied.

#### Pessimistic Scenario

The California Legislature mandated that all public entities make available to their peace officers a retirement program known as the Three at Fifty. The Three at Fifty permits all California peace officers to retire at age 50 at 3 percent of the total number of years in service. Actuaries generally apply the seventy-five percent rule, meaning that most people would not find

it cost effective to retire with anything less than twenty-five years of service and not gain significantly with more than eighty percent (or 27 years) of service.

The mandate takes effect January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2002. Undersheriff Small conducted a retirement survey of all sworn personnel in his agency to predict, prepare, and respond to staffing needs of the department. The survey produced stark evidence of an impending and unparalleled exodus of collective knowledge, experience, guidance and leadership around which this organization has thrived over the past thirty years. This organization is faced with the choice between effective recruitment and creative retention, or chaotic hiring and panic survival within the withering ranks. There is no middle ground to take. With the impending mandate only twelve months away, command, supervisory and line staff who ordinarily weren't considering retirement are now figuring fast and furiously. When and how will these veteran officers form the stampede? Shake down of the numbers shows decimation in and of the ranks. Two out the department's three captains will retire in 2001. Five out of ten lieutenants will retire. Eight out of twenty sergeants will leave. Approximately thirty percent of the deputies will retire in 2001 totaling up to about forty percent by 2005. And this doesn't account for the usual attrition loss due to medical disabilities and deputies seeking employment elsewhere.

The dismal analogy, although applicable, is fighting a war with diminishing troops. No draft to replenish losses. Few able-bodied volunteers to pick and worse yet, the troops fighting can leave the war any time they wish for safer and more gainful income. Perhaps the real tragedy is the devastation of morale that is descending like poison gas in a scud. You know it's on its way, and there isn't anything you can do about it except the best you can.

Who will lead by experience? Who will be left to navigate the terrain? Will the inexperienced troops be left to figure it out? The truth of the matter is that it is too late. Our

commanders, leaders, experienced supervisors, and experienced line troops should have been mentoring the younger, less experienced troops all along. It took these leaders twenty-five to thirty years to reach the point at which we now beg: “Don’t leave, don’t go.” We have done a great disservice to our young deputies by abandoning them. We had so much to offer – so much to give – and we could have done more. We failed. We didn’t. And – it’s too late, we can’t!

### Optimistic Scenario

It is December 19, 2006 and the Cloud County Sheriff’s Office has just completed a swearing-in ceremony of three new hires who have recently graduated from Cal State Lone Mountain University. These three new hires bring the total of college graduates hired over the past five years to twenty. In 1999, the Cloud County Sheriff’s Office was experiencing an ongoing recruitment and hiring dilemma exacerbated with the dot.com boom. A major point of contention with both the applicant pool as well as the agency attempting to hire these candidates was the length of the testing, background process and medical and psychological examinations. Also a problem was the fact that many different agencies were aggressively undercutting, going around the back door, and committing other such despicable acts to get that candidate to sign on the dotted line for their particular agency.

The Cloud County Sheriff’s Office studied the problem and developed a strategic plan to bring the entire testing process to the applicant. Networking with college professors to assist in identifying qualified candidates who were currently enrolled in a Criminal Justice field, along with working closely with POST to expedite the grading of the State written test, were the beginning of a new and innovative recruitment approach that has filled most all the vacancies over the last few years. The Cloud County Sheriff’s Office utilizes the most important resource,



the employees, to market the organization. The culture and leadership have been the key to the success in terms of ease of recruitment and more importantly, the stability of retention within the organization.

The lesson learned was a testimonial to the ownership that the employees accepted as stakeholders in the overall success of their chosen profession, law enforcement. The leadership was critical in creating the environment within the organization allowing the change to occur that improved the overall efficiency and effectiveness of the service delivered to the communities.

#### Surprise Free Scenario

It's May 4, 2005 and Captain Maloney has been assigned by the Sheriff to assist the Deputy Sheriff's Association with conducting a salary survey throughout the nine greater Bay Area counties in a continuing effort to obtain a raise for the upcoming contract negotiations. It has been six plus years since the Deputy Sheriffs received any significant salary raise and/or an increase in their benefit package. The Cloud County Sheriff's Office has been fighting the good fight in the recruitment battles; however, it has been more and more difficult to keep the interest of the applicants when other similar size agencies pay more and are able to hire them in less time. Housing costs within Cloud County as well as in nearby counties continue to escalate, forcing employees to commute longer distances for less pay. Cloud County Sheriff's Office continues to be regarded as the most professional law enforcement organization in the county, and the healthy organizational culture created by the leadership has lured the most ethical and morally grounded candidates of any local agency.

The Cloud County Sheriff's Office has been able to implement new and innovative recruitment approaches reflecting a creative and flexible organization. The Professional

Standards Unit has conducted recruitment and testing expeditions to several local and state universities resulting in successful hires that also have instilled a positive and diversified environment within the organization. However, with the economy threatening to go all over the map, the younger employees are discovering the difficulties of affordable housing and safe and secured learning institutions. The Gen-Xer's are not the fly-by-night cavaliers as first thought, but rather are very interested and committed to a fair wage as well as a healthy and caring organization. It is important to them to belong to an organization that creates the win-win relationships between management and line staff. Mentoring and developing employees in a fair and equitable environment within the organization are wonderful incentives that market the organization in a most favorable light.

The organization remains committed to its employees; however, a respectable increase in salary and benefits will continue to be a negotiated incentive that the Cloud County Sheriff's Office hopes to possess.

Identifying future trends and events that can, and in some cases, will impact the issue of recruitment strategies for law enforcement to compete in the job market provides the opportunity to plan your course of action and prepare to meet the challenges of finding and hiring qualified law enforcement professionals. Obviously, the optimistic scenario is where law enforcement agencies hope to be in terms of planning for the future as they recruit the next generation of law enforcement personnel.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **STRATEGIC PLAN AND TRANSITION MANAGEMENT**

#### Introduction

A Strategic Plan is an essential element of implementing change within an organization. The issue is to implement recruiting strategies today that will result in the quality of law enforcement that meets not the needs of today, but the future by the year 2006.

The Marin County Sheriff's Office is a medium size agency in a county with a population of approximately 242 thousand. The unincorporated communities have a total population of about 68 thousand. There are 207 sworn deputies that comprise the Marin County Sheriff's Office, which includes the operations of the County Jail and Courts. Marin County is predominantly a bedroom community with a large workforce that commutes to other regions of the Bay Area. The average price of a home is in the neighborhood of 650 thousand dollars.

There are eleven additional small police departments that also serve the communities in Marin County. They range in size from 10 officers to upwards of eighty officers in the larger municipalities. Most, if not all, have had a difficult time recruiting and retaining qualified people. The Marin County Sheriff's Office enjoys a leadership role within the law enforcement community in terms of providing advanced training, collaborative approaches to community services and implementation of new technology.

The county reached its expansion limits relating to new affordable housing long ago, and the prospect of locating an affordable home on the salary of a law enforcement officer/deputy is very grim. Many officers/deputies live in surrounding communities outside of Marin County that require at least an hour commute to and from work. The challenge of successfully

recruiting, hiring and retaining employees, both sworn and civilian, was one that the Marin County Sheriff's Office enthusiastically welcomed.

The County of Marin has a County Administrator/Board of Supervisor form of government. The Sheriff is currently in his first term as the citizen elected department head and followed a four term Sheriff.

This strategic plan will identify strategies imperative to developing the most preferred future of recruiting qualified employees. The Marin County Sheriff's Office adopted a Mission Statement that built the foundation for all future strategies and gives the organization an identity and purpose.

#### Mission Statement

- We Value: Our Commitment to Protect Lives and Property  
We are dedicated to providing the highest quality of service to protect the citizens of our County.
- We Value: Honesty, Integrity, and Truthfulness  
We recognize that honesty, integrity, and truthfulness are the foundations of our profession. We will constantly strive to maintain the highest standards recognizing their importance in upholding our credibility within the law enforcement profession and communities we serve.
- We Value: Professionalism, Community Service, and the Rights of All Individuals  
We are dedicated to performing our duties in accordance with the Constitution, State laws, and County ordinances, while protecting the rights of all individuals. We recognize that our direction is to be guided by reflection of the community we serve. We will build from the strengths and values provided by the community and ensure the fair and equitable treatment of all
- We Value: Community Involvement  
We respond to the needs of the community; therefore, the community should have significant involvement in achieving a safe and secure county. We will continuously seek mutual cooperation on all community related issues, reducing the threat of crime, and enhancing the quality of life.

We Value: Our Employees, The Department's Most Valuable Resource  
We are dedicated to building a department based on a foundation of fairness, respect and equal opportunity provided by an environment of open and honest communications, quality leadership, training and mutual support.<sup>11</sup>

### Situational Analysis

Prior to any strategic plan, an evaluation of the current state of the organization is fundamental. A situational assessment analyzes weaknesses, opportunities, threats, and strengths. This assessment is labeled the WOTS-UP model, and it enables the organization to prepare to address the issue. Opportunities and threats are outside the organization and can be identified as trends and events. Strengths and weaknesses are internal to the organization and identify either the positive aspects or possible obstacles to the organization's objectives.

#### Internal Weaknesses

- Homeostasis- the organization's attempt to maintain the status quo.
- Cumbersome bureaucratic constraints imposed by Human Resources Department
- Lack of an internal recruiting Personnel Analyst
- Maintaining myth of self-sufficiency
- Continued budgetary constraints resulting in the inability to offer paid incentives, bonuses, etc.
- Employees' apathetic approach to marketing the organization

#### External Opportunities

- Unexplored pool of potential qualified candidates
- Implementation of organizational testing and assessment specific to organizational and community needs

- Addition of a recruitment Personnel Analyst
- Utilization of new hires in marketing, testing and assessment
- Profession-wide movement towards a more caring and responsive public image will create a more attractive perspective for job opportunity.

#### External Threats

- Inter-agency competition for same qualified applicant pool
- Insufficient transportation infrastructure
- Negative media portrayal of law enforcement conduct
- Lack of convenient and affordable child care
- Intrusive examination of personal history background for law enforcement position
- Lack of public education of job dimensions for the law enforcement profession

#### Internal Strengths

- Leadership and management stability within the organization
- A collaborative organizational model, more inclusive and personable versus the authoritative model
- Absence of negative publicity
- An organizational environment where development and mentoring is fostered and encouraged
- An organization of exemplary professional standards exhibited by everyone; sworn and professional staff

### Stakeholder Identification

Stakeholders are key components in any strategic plan. It's important to identify who they are, and to analyze their specific concerns and expectations for the strategic planning process. Stakeholders are individuals and/or groups of people who are impacted by what we do and individuals or groups of people who can impact what we do.

The following is a list of stakeholders and their concerns along with expectations related to the issue in the future. The organization must fully understand the assumed expectations of the stakeholders to secure any hope of a successful strategic plan.

#### County Administrator

- Desires teamwork between Human Resource and organization
- Expects best candidates for hire
- Expects minimal fiscal impact
- Expects good public image of organization

#### Board of Supervisors

- Does not want contention amongst other departments
- May not adopt full support of innovation of approach
- Support for paradigm shift may change with election

#### District Attorney

- Wants ethical, honest, trustworthy candidates
- May want to chose specific person for assignment
- May want to voice opinion on standards

#### Sheriff/ Management

- Want an inclusive organization from top to bottom
- Want the most ethical, honest, and trustworthy employees
- Want to create and maintain an environment of respect, equal opportunity
- Want policy and procedure conformity
- Want development and mentoring

### Supervisors/ Trainers

- Want agency to hire qualified candidates
- Want to develop and mentor competent people
- Need to accept an organization of inclusion
- Need to understand marketing the organization
- Need to trust the Mission Statement

### Tenured Employee

- Will resist change
- Need to understand marketing the organization
- Want fairness, respect, and equal opportunity for development

### Applicant Pool

- Want fairness in entire hiring process
- Want to be a part of a caring organization
- Want an opportunity to develop
- Need to identify with a mentor
- Want to be appreciated for their input

### Strategy Plan/ Development

As the organization moves forward in developing a strategic plan to impact the issue of future recruitment strategies, the barriers that lay ahead must be conquered. Leadership is the key to the success of the overall plan. The leadership needs to be active in the development and mentoring of the organization. Leadership must maintain consistency and be responsible for ensuring the open and honest communication throughout the organization. Management by walking around and marketing the mission of the organization internally and externally will be the most useful tool in implementing a successful strategic plan. Apathy has no place in the organization, no matter the rank and status within the organization. Creative ideas adopted through the brainstorming process of forecasting future trends and events will foster a positive environment within the organization and a migration of qualified candidates will follow.



The inclusion of employees in the recruitment, testing, and assessment of qualified candidates exemplifies the essence of marketing the organization to the fullest extent. Bringing the testing process to the applicants makes the process a win-win experience for both parties while still maintaining fairness and equal opportunity. All of this cannot be accomplished without a solid foundation of mutual support, quality leadership, and respect in the organization, which are recognized externally as well as internally.

## **TRANSITION MANAGEMENT**

A Transition Management Plan is the vehicle in which the organization can move from its present state to desired future state. In essence, it is the internal marketing of the overall strategic plan to address the issue. Key players, also referred to as members of the critical mass, will be the drivers of the strategic plan vehicle directed toward a common goal. The common goal is developing recruitment strategies to maintain qualified law enforcement personnel in a competitive job market by the year 2006.

### **Commitment Plan**

To begin, an organization must identify the reason for change and then bring the organization together to implement the change. The core of any organization is its ability to bring people together to learn new ideas. Peter Senge, in his book *The Fifth Discipline*, describes the learning organization as a concept that enables organizations to deal with significant problems facing them and move successfully into the future.<sup>12</sup> The stakeholders' concerns and expectations are a part of shared vision for change that is not dictated from up top, but emerges throughout the organization.

## Critical Mass

Every organization has individuals or groups whose active commitment is necessary to provide the energy for the change to occur. They are considered advocates of the change process, and reflect what is called Critical Mass. This critical mass is the jumping off point where the energy and resources are ripe for change. Their commitment to the change and their passion for success creates the optimum learning environment for a shared vision to be achieved. The identified critical mass in this change effort are the stakeholders whose commitment and passion for the change will influence others to assist in meeting the goals and objectives.

- Sheriff
- Human Resources
- Tenured Employees
- County Administrator
- Management Staff
- Board of Supervisors
- Sergeants

It is important to identify the current level of commitment of the stakeholders in the critical mass. Table 4.1 illustrates where the stakeholders' current commitment is located and where it will need to transfer to accomplish the strategic plan.

Key Players	No Commitment	Let It Happen	Help It Happen	Make It Happen
Sheriff		X —————		O →
Human Resources	X —————		O →	
Tenured Employees	X —————	O →		
County Administrator		X —————	O →	
Management Staff			X —————	O →
Board of Supervisors		XO		
Sergeants			X —————	O →

**Table 4.1**  
Critical Mass commitment  
X= current position O= desired position

#### Leadership Development

Each time a leader explains his/her vision and attempts to persuade others to blaze a new path, the leader is asking people to believe in him/her and to go along with the risks in the unknown. Compassion for the well-being of others can produce the necessary action to make a vision happen<sup>12</sup>. The organization must create that environment of trust, compassion for others, and the belief that creative ideas are encouraged and appreciated.

#### Transition Techniques

The leader of an organization must believe in the strategic plan completely and be able to communicate his or her vision so that it will lead the organization to the identified goals and objectives which will ultimately benefit the organization. The leader transfers responsibility of the transition to a Transition Manager. The Transition Manager serves as the change agent who

possesses the knowledge necessary to implement change, and possesses credibility with critical mass and is respected by management. A task force comprised of individuals in the organization as well as outside the organization will work under the Transition Manager to accomplish the preferred outcomes.

The Transition Manager must also be skilled in communicating the shared vision of the organization as well as creating an understanding within the task force to ensure the best possible outcomes. Training others in the organization outside the identified task force is imperative to create complete inclusion within the organization and could prove to drastically improve the marketing of the organization to the outside world.

Evaluating the progress of the process is another responsibility of the Transition Manager. The Transition Manager should task people in the organization along with stakeholders to illicit feedback both positive and negative, and to assist the Transition Manager in monitoring the short and long term impacts of the strategy. Communication of an up and down nature needs to be constant throughout the process.

This is not a difficult process, but it can challenge the comfort level of some leaders who wish to remain in the office and refuse to believe that they must plan for the future. A leader of an organization must recognize and develop strategies today that will address the future recruitment needs of their agency. Merely throwing money and resources at the issue will not attract and hire a workforce in the future, but implementing a plan based on sound ideas and principles of an inclusive organization will create the opportunity to be successful in future recruitment endeavors.

## CHAPTER IV

### CONCLUSION

*Take people where they are and take them to places they have never been.*<sup>13</sup>

#### Project Summary

The issue of recruitment and competition has long been a priority topic in the law enforcement profession, and many agencies still are attempting to remedy the dilemma. Few have made any discernable progress. This project examined the issues and suggested recruitment strategies based on a leadership culture that creates equal opportunities of development and is built upon a foundation of respect, truthfulness and mutual support. This is in contrast to other suggested models where salaries, benefits, and assisted housing costs are used to address recruitment for filling vacancies. This project does not distract from those important concerns for the workforce, but rather challenges each organization to examine its current culture and proposes that qualified candidates in today's society are covetous of an organization which allows them to create long-term bonds of loyalty with teaching managers and mentors<sup>14</sup>.

Succinctly stated, a healthy learning organization that values employee creativity and encourages inclusion in terms of identifying strategic plans for future change will create the most effective marketing tool the organization can employ to recruit and successfully hire qualified candidates.

#### Implications for Leadership

Leadership is the hub from which success and/or failure emanate within any organization, public and/or private. Leaders must maintain clarity of vision, and continually assess the internal health of the organization to ensure productivity and effectiveness. This can be

accomplished with continuous development throughout the ranks of the organization and encouragement of creative ideas to address the fast approaching future needs of the profession.

Organizational success feeds off of enthusiasm and vision by the formal leader, and if the leader is excited about creating opportunities for all employees and a better, more productive existence for all employees touched by the culture, then others may also catch the enthusiasm.<sup>15</sup>

During this project, the Marin County Sheriff's Office conducted a recruitment and testing pilot project at California State University Sacramento. Candidates were identified through contacting a Professor at the University and thirteen candidates participated. Members of the Marin County Sheriff's Office traveled to the University and in two days administered the state written test, a written exemplar test, a physical agility test and conducted oral boards and B-Pad examinations. The state written test and the written exemplar test were graded immediately, along with the physical agility test. The second day was comprised of oral boards and B-Pad examinations. Also during these two days the candidates completed both the Personal History Statement and the Background Questionnaire and all associated waivers were signed. At the end of two days there were twelve candidates certified and ready for backgrounds. Normally, it would be ninety days minimum before a single candidate would begin a background examination. Constant communication existed between the candidates and the Professional Standards Unit throughout the entire process. The candidates were flown down from Sacramento via the Air Patrol and were given tours of the organization and completed Computer Voice Stress Analyzer (CVSA) examinations. Thorough background investigations were completed on all qualified candidates with the outcome of five new hires out of thirteen candidates. One candidate failed to complete the testing process, one candidate said that the

process was moving too fast and withdrew her name from consideration, and two candidates failed the background examination.

The breakdown of the five new hires is as follows: four college graduates with degrees, one to obtain degree within a year. Three were females, and two were males. The first three candidates were hired and on the job within three months from the start of the process, and the two remaining candidates were offered employment one month prior to their graduation. In total, the recruitment, testing, background investigations, medical, and psychological exams were completed with five successful new hires within six months.

These strategies were a success, not only for the creative and innovative aspects, but also because the leadership provided the support and encouraged the inclusion of all staff to put their best foot forward in marketing the organization.

Interviews of these new hires revealed that they were impressed with the testing process in terms of the format, professional presentation, and the receptiveness of the needs and questions offered by the candidates. They were appreciative of the manner in which they were processed and were sold on the friendly and familial culture of the organization.

Organizations that are professional, credible, and value and respect their employees will benefit from these strategies and their ability to develop additional innovative strategies will be enhanced.

### Budget Implications

In every new and innovative strategic plan there will be financial implications. However, long term results of these strategies will pay dividends in terms of quality employees that are enriched through a sound and fair development process based on a foundation of respect and mutual support.

The pilot project to California State University Sacramento certainly had costs associated, but in relation to what will be required of a small law enforcement agency to compete in the future job market, these were costs well spent. For planning purposes, the associated costs for this project can be estimated at \$3,000 per campaign.

### Conclusion

Within California, local and county agencies are creating individualized marketing strategies to stay competitive within the marketplace. Even federal agencies within the state have embarked upon specialized programs and community relations campaigns to maintain their quota of agents<sup>16</sup>.

Certainly, issues relating to competitive salaries and benefits, quality of life, and available reputable education institutions for their families are important for existence. However, if the organization does not provide a stable learning and developmental culture, one of two consequences will occur, maybe both. First, agencies will continue to lower their standards so as to hire any warm body to fill their vacancies. Secondly, agencies will find themselves in similar situations as L.A.P.D. with regard to the Rampart misconduct. Therefore, law enforcement



agencies must change their approach to recruiting and testing candidates in the future to compete in a competitive job market.

This project, which identifies strategies such as condensing the testing process along with bringing the testing process to the potential candidates, will attract a larger pool of qualified individuals. This strategy can be accomplished by identifying recruiters outside the organization such as college professors, instructors at trade schools, and even managers at computer technology corporations as a source in locating candidates. Historically, law enforcement agencies remained at the office and expected the candidates to come to them and offered no consideration to time, travel or the needs of the candidate to be informed in terms of measuring their progress in the process.

Beginning today, law enforcement must vigorously attempt to meet the needs of the candidate throughout the testing and hiring process. Continually marketing the organization from within to attract those from the outside will ultimately determine if success can be achieved without losing or lowering the high standards of the profession. The pilot project at California State University Sacramento illustrated that a small law enforcement agency can aggressively recruit and hire qualified candidates in a timely manner without comprising the integrity of the hiring process, and must continue to do so in the future.

As stated in the introduction, many law enforcement agencies throughout the United States are spending large amounts of money in travel expenses to participate in job fairs and recruitment visits without much success because they fail to properly analyze and plan a thorough strategy to its completion. Others are lowering standards to fill current vacancies that arguably evolve into problem employees in the future, or still others offer employees monetary incentives to bring in new recruits. These shortsighted ideas may at times work, but more often

than not they create more problems than they solve. The conventional recruitment of advertise, give an exam and interview hundreds of applicants at one time only to hire a miniscule number will not resolve this issue of recruitment of qualified law enforcement candidates by the year 2006. It is imperative that law enforcement change from the conventional theory of recruitment and hiring to new and innovative approaches that challenge everyone in their respective organizations to be creative today to ensure a successful future of recruiting tomorrow's law enforcement leaders.

**Appendix A**  
Participants in the  
Nominal Group Technique

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- **Mr. Michael C. Grogan, Ph.D.**           **Licensed Psychologist**
- **Mr. James Evans**                   **Personnel Commission**
- **Ms. Hilda Castillo**                   **Member Sheriff's**  
  **Citizens Advisory Cmte**
- **Ms. Kathy Broderick**               **Senior Principle Analyst**  
  **Human Resource Dept**
- **Mr. Dennis Finnegan**               **Undersheriff, Marin Co.**
- **Mr. Julian Klugman**               **Human Rights Commission**
- **Ms. Cokie Lepinski**               **Asst. Communication Mngr**  
  **Marin County S.O.**

**Appendix B**  
List of potential trends  
Identified by the NGT Panel

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1. Applicant entitlement- Generation X
2. Cost of Living
3. Increased Diversified Demographics
4. Increasing complexity in labor laws
5. Emphasis on Long Term Problem Solving/ Community Policing
6. Competition with high tech jobs
7. Inter-agency competition in jobs
8. Drop in some crime rates
9. Influence of Public Perception on Law Enforcement
10. Length of hiring process
11. Decrease in military personnel applicant pool
12. Use of Marketing Practices in Recruitment Approach
13. Drug use by applicants
14. Changing role for women in Law Enforcement
15. Job sharing / alternative work schedules
16. Emphasis on Ethics during Hiring Process

**Appendix C**  
List of potential events  
Identified by the NGT Panel

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1. Adoption of 3% at 50 by local agencies
2. Subsidized housing
3. Significant downward shift in the national economy
4. Court Decision allowing Affirmative Action in hiring process
5. Mandatory Binding Arbitration for all Public Employees
6. Repeal of Three Strikes Legislation
7. Mandated child care
8. Legislature Enacts Increased Liability Exposure for Peace Officers in Excessive Force Claims.
9. Repeal of Peace Officers' Bill of Rights
10. Significant Domestic Terrorist Acts

## Endnotes

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- <sup>1</sup> Dailey, Rob. Competition For Cops. Western City Newsletter, June 1999, p 21
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- <sup>4</sup> Rogers, Richards Nationwide Shortage of Cops Is Highlighted Backup News, September 2000 p 1
- <sup>5</sup> Rogers, Richard Recruiting Cops Gets Difficult Backup News, May 2000 p 1
- <sup>6</sup> Rogers, Richard Recruiting Cops Gets Difficult Backup News, May 2000 p 1
- <sup>7</sup> Johnson, Kevin. Police Struggle to Find Next Generation. USA Today, November 2000, p 1b
- <sup>8</sup> Johnson, Kevin Police Struggle to Find Next Generation USA Today, November 2000, p 1a
- <sup>9</sup> Dailey, Rob. Competition For Cops. Western City Newsletter, June 1999, p 21
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- <sup>13</sup> Hoyle, John R. Leadership and Futuring. Corwin Press Inc., 1995, p x
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- <sup>15</sup> Hoyle, John R. Leadership and Futuring. Corwin Press Inc., 1995, p 25
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